

Traditional gender roles puts women at the core of caregiving (unpaid) activities. According to INE (2022), of the total number of people who perform unpaid activities, 7 out of 10 are men while 9 out of 10 are women. Men spend 8.6 hours per week on this type of work, while women spend 36.9 hours. These proportions change very little when considering the area of residence (Time Use Survey, 2016).

### **Situation and difficulties in employment access for persons with disabilities**

In Paraguay, the National Constitution in Article 58 guarantees all its inhabitants the right to lawful work, freely chosen and conducted under dignified and just conditions. However, those with disabilities do not enjoy these guarantees and face difficulties in obtaining adequate employment opportunities in both public and private enterprises. Similarly, in Chapter VIII of Labour Law, Article 88 on non-discrimination states that no discrimination among workers based on ethnic reasons, sex, age, religion, social status, or political or union preferences will be permitted. It also guarantees that the work of people with physical or mental limitations or disabilities will be especially protected (National Constitution, 1992). By ratifying and incorporating international conventions and treaties, the Paraguayan State commits to the disability sector, ensuring it is not excluded from the country's laws. However, despite the existence of protective laws, persons with disabilities are not adequately protected, and there remains a lack of awareness of these laws, particularly regarding employment inclusion in the public sector. In identifying the employment situation of persons with disabilities in Paraguay, it is observed that the country has 316,324 persons with disabilities of economically active age, of which 15,816 are in conditions to be integrated into the workforce. Of this population, only 1% have successfully been employed. The population of persons with disabilities seeking employment is evenly distributed between sexes, aged between 26 and 35 years, and mostly have incomplete secondary education<sup>7</sup>.

## **2.2 Problem Analysis**

Informality and instability in employment are structural problems of the Paraguayan labour market identified in the National Development Plan. According to this Plan, despite relatively low unemployment levels, there is a high proportion of the population with precarious employment (especially young people and women) (INE, 2022).

34.2% of youth population aged between 15 and 29 years was outside the labor force in 2021, and the average schooling of this group was only 10 years (INE, 2022). Furthermore, in 2022, 29.8% of the population between 15 and 19 years, 66.8% between 20 and 24 years and 85.9% between 25 and 29 years did not attend school. These data make Paraguayan youth amongst the most vulnerable in Latin America, and impacts on productivity and competitiveness of the country. This, added to the rate of labour evasion (avoiding to search a job), leads to critical problems in terms of job quality (labour precariousness).

The main problems for which the Action proposes short and medium-term responses are as follows:

- **Informality in employment is the result of low human capital development and, consequently, precarious insertion into the labour market, resulting in low productivity and low salaries.**

Regarding human capital, educational indicators are critical. The main cause of school dropout is work, critically affecting adolescents, with 40% excluded from the educational system due to the imperative need to generate income for their families. In the case of adolescent women, this often imply carrying out domestic and care activities. According to a UNICEF study, about 457,844 children and adolescents between 5 and 17 years are out of the education system, 25.3% of the child-adolescent population (UNICEF, 2022).

In 2022, youth labour informality reached approximately 628,000 people, representing 33.9% of the total number of employed in the informal segment of the labour market, which summarises the incidence of labour informality in this segment of the population (INE, 2023). In the same year, 29.8% of young people between 15 and 19 years of age did not attend any educational establishment, which implies that close to 450,000 young people were outside the educational system (INE, 2023). 10.4% of young people between 15 and 24 years old do not study, work or receive training (INE, 2023).

The chances of formalisation are low without an academic diploma and/or labour skills certifications. Given that training costs are high, the chances of companies investing in the formalisation of the workforce that does not have academic diplomas and/or certifications of work skills are low. This also discourages the establishment of medium

<sup>7</sup> [Employability of Persons with Disabilities from the Governance Framework of the SENADIS, Paraguay](#)